The Pulpit

A SERMON BY THE REV. THOMAS DIXON, JR.

Subject: The New Note.

Brooklyn, N. Y.—Preaching at the Calvary Baptist Temple, Pentecostal Church, Hamburg avenue and Weirfield street, on the theme, "The Church's New Note," the Rev. I. W. Henderson, pastor, took as his text Mark 12:39: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." He said:

The adaptability of the Gospel is wonderful. In every epoch and in every age wherever the truth of God as it has been revealed in Jesus Christ has been preached, it has been found to be a fit guide for the leading of the minds and hearts and souls of men, a true solvent for the evils of the epoch and the age in which it has been declared. Always it has possessed a message that has been perpetually adaptable to the individual and social inquiries and to the individual and social spiritual yearnings and necessities of the society to which it has been proclaimed. When in apostolic times the predecessors of budding human life was discounted and largely minimized the vitalizing Gospel of Jesus Christ revealed the beauty and the value of life itself. So that in the anti-Reformation days the truth was endangered by the regrettable unwisdom of the ecclesiastical authorities of that day and time too precious Gospel was not opened wide the treasury of written truth that had been purposed in all its fragrance through the centuries and is now ere for mankind began. As in those times so throughout Christendom it has been. Whatever may have been the sins, the spiritual yearnings, the mode of thought, the manner of expression of any generation, the Gospel has always adapted itself and been found humanly adaptable to the sins, the yearnings, the thoughts, the terminology of the period. Every revival in Christian History, especially in the history of the last four hundred years, has had its peculiar message, adaptable to the sins, the yearnings, the spiritual needs, the thought and the terminology of the time in which it has been preached. Historians tell us that when in the days of Josiah the Edwards—days in which Christianity was largely legalistic in thought and speech—the fiery prophet of the living God wished to bring men into an open realization and confession of their sinfulness and their accountability to God he preached them sermons on the essential fact and necessity of Divine sovereignty; and with burning zeal declared to humanity, as God gave him opportunity to sow the seed of His truth, the wisdom of yielding self into the control of the Divine Ruler of the universe. Wesley preached the truth of the freedom of the will to a nation to whom freedom was life. "Whosoever will may come" was not all the Gospel then, nor is it all the Gospel now; but it is the love of truth by which men in the days of that great revival were made unquickly turned to love and serve God.

We are face to face with another great world-wide revival. We are in the midst of it. It may not be recognized in some quarters and it may be blinked in others. Many men refuse to recognize it or they may fail to have the insight to perceive it, but it is here none the less. Evidencing itself within the church it is expressing itself more largely perhaps outside of the church than within it.

Men are more hard-hearted to the messages of yesterday. Not that they disdain Christ, but because the proclamations of the past have lost, through perfunctory familiarity with them, the power to cut deep into their hearts. The edge of the truth has become dulled for them. It needs to be brought to the tempering fire of a flaming truth that shall make it again attract men. It must be laid hard on the wheel of a compelling Divine reality that shall put an edge on all that has become dulled. The preaching of Edwards will not do it, the oratory of Wesley will not do it, the simple messages of Finney will not do it, the declaration of God's love in the mouth of Moody will not do it. These are our places of departure. The truth that these men have declared is the same w-e-arefor whom we must vitalize that dormant truth by flinging a new message into their souls. We must warn the children of members of their own religious experience with the blaze of a modern message that, having its inattractions in the historic Christ, shall be indwelt of His presence and energized of His spirit for a special ministry to-day. Men know that God is sovereign; they know that the human will is free, for are they not exercising it against God every day? They know that personal responsibility for personal sin or decency is inescapable; they know that God is love, but do not need to prove these things to them most insistently. What we need to do is to proclaim before them a new note from the old Anthem of God's revelation of His truth and Himself in Jesus Christ that shall find a correlative note in their own souls and lead them into larger harmony with the age-long chorus of the redeemed of God. It is the business of the church of Jesus Christ to strike this note and to accept no leadership.

Granted that these things are true, what then shall be our note now? What test is the Scripture to give? What word of God shall be our watchword? What test in the Scriptural shall epitomize our thought? About what idea shall our preaching revolve? In my humble judgment the test which shall epitomize the message of the new revival is that which is to be found, as indicated in the text for this evening in the Gospel according to St. Mark, the 12th chapter and the 30th verse: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." And that which took hold upon the crystallize our thinking shall be the conception of human love for God. As the basis of Moody's evangel was the love of God for men, so, I verily believe, ere we shall do the work for Jesus that we desire to perform, we must declare, with insistency and with cumulative force, the dignity, the wisdom, the fairness, the efficacy of human love for God.

The trouble with us to-day is not that we do not know that God loves us. The trouble is that men do not love God. The evil which afflicts us can only be cured by the exercise of a controlling and vitalizing love for God, such a love as shall mellow and beautify the souls of men. The iniquity, hatred, scourges as now and tormentis us would not be if, in the past, men had loved God. A thoroughgoing love for God will make evil conditions in this world as impossible as they will be in the new dispensation hereafter. The golden rule has failed to accomplish its mission, not because it is not a truth but because it is only half a truth, as it is popularly used to-day. The second commandment is a safe guide for our rule and practice through life only when it is correlated with that primary commandment which our Lord enunciated as at the logical centre of the moral and spiritual realities. The golden rule is not enough of a guide for us as we travel toward the undiscovered country. We must be more than moral if we desire happiness here and hope to enter into the eternal hereafter. The golden rule must be vitalized by the living first principle of the kingdom of God. The trouble with the world is that men have been altogether too well satisfied to do and be done by, as God never intended they should. See for a moment how this half truth works in practice. You and I are on the Stock Exchange. You are satisfied that if by trickery or falsification or by the spreading of dangerous reports, true or untrue, I can depress to-day's 4s to, provided I afford you equal opportunity to do the same to me, you and I are trading honors. It is all right for you to fleece me if my eyes open so long as I am permitted to fleece you in the same manner. You and I are in business. It is proper for me to steal your trade provided you have an equal opportunity with me to steal. Of course it means a modern interpretation of the golden rule, which says, "Whatsoever ye are willing that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them." But the thing essentially lacking is the spirit of Christ's law. The principle of the business world is not love, but it is all right for one day or week in the year to be agreed that it shall be fair to play the game in accordance with the golden rule that way. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," we are told. But when the law is separated from the correlated truth that Christ declared, and emphasized when he said, the lives of multitudes of men to-day, we understand what an awful half truth it has become.

In all seriousness, I do not desire that some men shall love me in the way they love themselves, outside of Christ. I do not care to practice the golden rule on to-day that it is promulgated in our social life, outside of Jesus Christ, or to have it so practiced upon me. For none of us have the comprehension of their own value and the demands of their own integrity upon their lives; and how, therefore, can they apportion the value of the lives, the minds, the hearts, the souls, the powers and joys and happiness of their fellow men? Some men have such a small estimate, seemingly, of themselves, judged by the way they treat themselves, that we should be failure to measure did we not recall like treatment by them of us. Some men have such a distorted self-interpretation of what is right for men to do unto them that they cannot be expected to know, unless the grace of God inform them, what they should do to their fellows.

The message for our own time, the appeal of to-day, must be based on the text I have read. Its theme must be the love of man for God. Loving God, we shall conserve the sacredness of our own personalities and gain a divine value of our own worth to God and to the world. Loving God, we shall know the value of our fellows.

Do you suppose for an instant that men would have the audacity to publish declarations that they were self-worth a paltry couple of hundred millions if they really love God as God means they should be. Do you suppose for an instant that they would invest that they can buy legislatures and control the governments, if they loved God as Jesus loved Him? If we loved God as Jesus means we should, do you suppose that we would stand for child labor, with all its horrors and cruelties; for the saloon as it is, with all its trafiage of vice and crime and misery and poverty and despair? If we loved God as Jesus meant we should, have you the slightest suspicion that we would permit women by the thousands to be cast into the brothel in economic self-defense? If men loved God, could it be thinkable that they would murder and rape and fling themselves in drunkenness, in bestiality and crime? Do you think that if we could get men to love God, they would not have again a lively conviction of His sovereignty and Edwards declared it, and of their responsibility to do the right as Wesley declared it, and of their personal responsibility for the salvation of the lost, as Finney declared it, and of their personal responsibility for a larger life and of their indebtedness to divine love as Moody declared it? I think not.

The new note of the church will be the love of men for God. For it is the second logical step in the scheme of redemption. Christ died for us. In Christ hath already loved men, and now loves them. It is for them to reciprocate His love. The new message must be the central truth of the kingdom of God on its moral side. We must lead men to love God. Then shall we reach them, and then shall we hear a voice out of the upper room say, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, their God."

Kaiser William a Matchmaker.

One day the Kaiser was walking in civilian dress when he was recognized by a corporal, a lieutenant noticing that the man's face wore a familiar expression, questioned him. For some time the corporal was reluctant to reply, but at last confessed that he was in love with the daughter of his sergeant major, but the marriage was impossible since the girl's father-in-law would have none less than a sergeant as a son-in-law.

"Do you really love the girl?" inquired the Kaiser.

"With all my heart," was the reply.

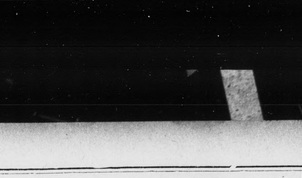
"Very well, then; go and tell your sergeant major that the Kaiser has made you a sergeant."—From M. A. P.

THE BLIND GOD.

Ethel—"Jack is blindly in love with you."

Rose—"How do you know?"

Ethel—"Herold me he didn't think you looked a day over twenty-nine."—Cleveland Leader.



Poultry and Fruit Growing.

A combination of fruit growing and poultry raising is especially recommended in a bulletin from the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture. Locate the poultry houses if possible so that the runs will be in the orchard. The fowls will destroy thousands of harmful insects, thus greatly benefiting the trees and increasing the prospects for fruit and the fowls will at the same time gain great comfort and benefit by the protecting shade of the trees. Plum trees and cherry trees are especially benefited by the presence of fowls about their roots. Peach trees will grow most rapidly and soonest give an abundant shade.—Weekly Witness.

The Family Horse.

The family horse is not what is understood by a "coach" horse, though the latter is usually good enough to be desired for the horse that is to give comfort and pleasure to each member of the family. The coach horse, so called, is driven by a regular hired driver, and if the horse has style, life and size, he answers the purpose very well; but in the case of the family horse, there must be perfect safety when each and every member of the family becomes driver. The family horse must be sound, kind and willing, cool-headed and intelligent in a measure, and must be safe to leave unhitched, for a horse that one can't trust to stand for a moment without hitching is no kind of an animal with which practically every member of the family can be trusted.—Weekly Witness.

An Egg.

Seventy-four per cent of an egg is water. Note the importance of providing good fresh clear water for the fowls for best results in egg production.

Fourteen and a half per cent. of an egg is protein. Give feed rich in protein. Lean meat, fresh cut clover, alfalfa and wheat bran are also possessed of protein.

Ten and one-half per cent. of an egg is fat.

The shell of an egg is composed of lime, and it takes considerable to produce the shell for an egg every other day. It is a drain on the system, and sea shells, air-slaked lime and fresh cut bone assist the hen materially in the production of eggs. Corn will produce the fat necessary, but should not be fed exclusively, as